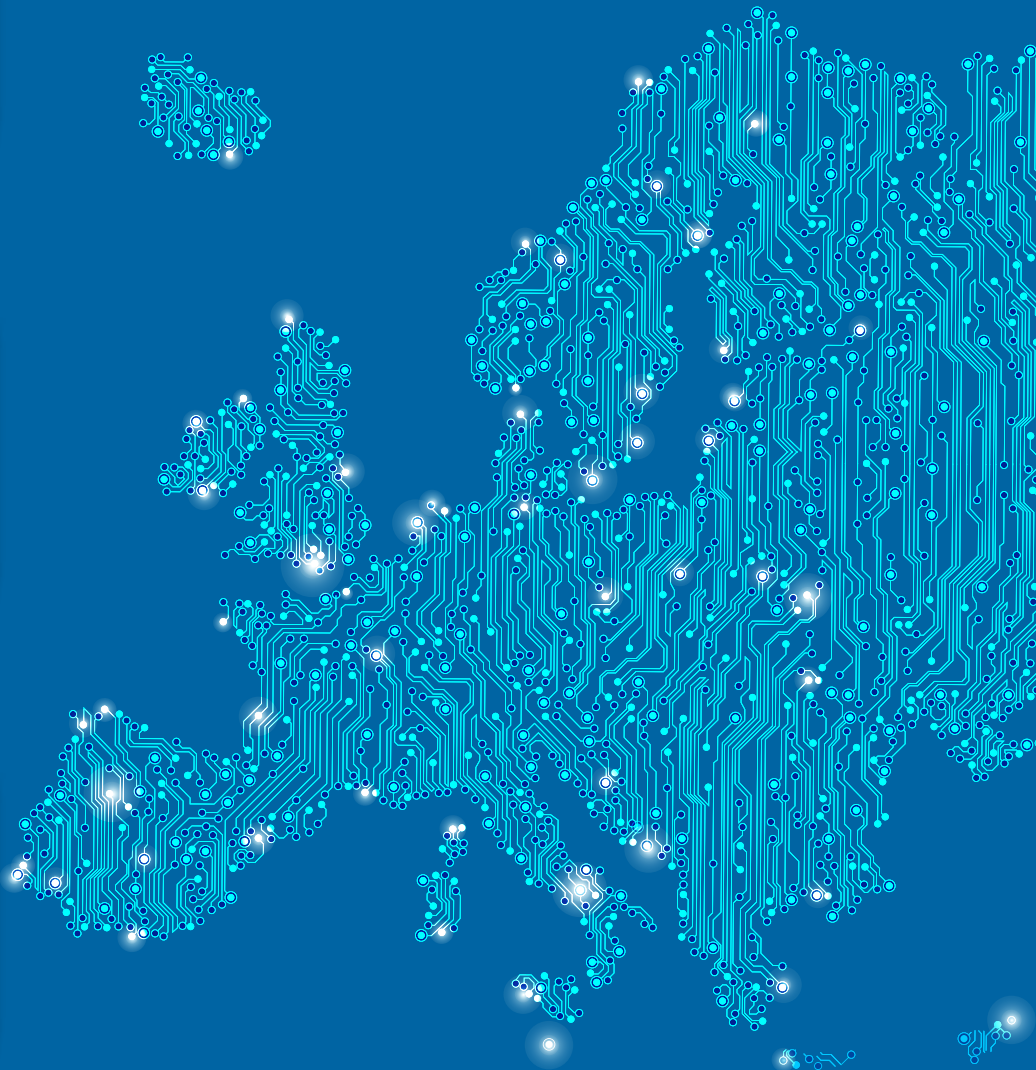




# eu-LISA in Action

IT in the service of a more open  
and secure Europe



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in the area of freedom, security and justice, 2014

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# Foreword



For the first time in its history, the European Union has an agency responsible for managing and promoting information and communication technology (ICT) as a key success factor for implementing the Union's policies in the area of justice, security and freedom.

The internal security of countries is changing enormously. Guaranteeing their security and that of their people can no longer just be done through physical resources on the ground. The 'virtual world' of IT is now part of the equation, as authorities are increasingly reliant on data and information.

In today's complex and globalised world, a single state cannot look after its security alone. Hence the importance of sophisticated, flexible and integrated IT systems and solutions — designed to enable law-enforcement cooperation and integrated border management at EU level.

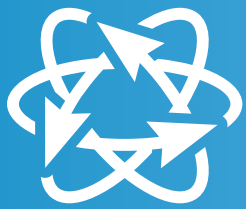
At our Agency, we help EU countries get the most out of the latest ICT technologies in the fields of border management, asylum and law enforcement so that they can protect their people and people's rights. We manage key large-scale integrated IT systems dealing with things such as security information, visas and asylum applications at European level. We therefore help to make sure Europeans can move freely in the EU, without ever compromising on Europe's security.

eu-LISA can count on widespread support when delivering its services, thanks to strong and open relationships forged with the EU institutions and other Agencies working in this field. We will continue to collaborate with them in order to build on our achievements in the coming years.

Krum Garkov  
Executive Director of eu-LISA

# Table of Contents

<b>1. A dynamic Agency for EU home affairs</b>	<b>3</b>
Who we are and what we do	3
Mission, vision and values	4
Core values	5
Focused training for IT specialists	5
<b>2. Core mandate</b>	<b>6</b>
An open and secure Europe	6
VIS (Visa Information System)	6
SIS II (Schengen Information System)	8
Eurodac	9
<b>3. Organisation</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Looking to the future</b>	<b>12</b>



# 1. A dynamic Agency for EU home affairs



## Who we are and what we do

Founded in December 2012, eu-LISA supports the EU's justice and home affairs policies by managing large-scale IT systems that help to make the free movement of EU citizens a reality. In particular, the Agency is responsible for the operational management of three key large IT systems. eu-LISA keeps all IT systems under its responsibility functioning 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This allows the continuous, uninterrupted exchange of data between the national authorities that use the systems.

The first of these is SIS II (the second-generation Schengen Information System), which is Europe's largest information system for public security and law-enforcement cooperation. The second, VIS (Visa Information System), is a database helping countries in the border-free Schengen Area to exchange visa data about applications by people from outside the EU for short-stay visas to visit or to travel in that area. The third, Eurodac (EUROpean Asylum DACtyloscopy database), is a large-scale fingerprint database that mainly assists with the processing of asylum applications.



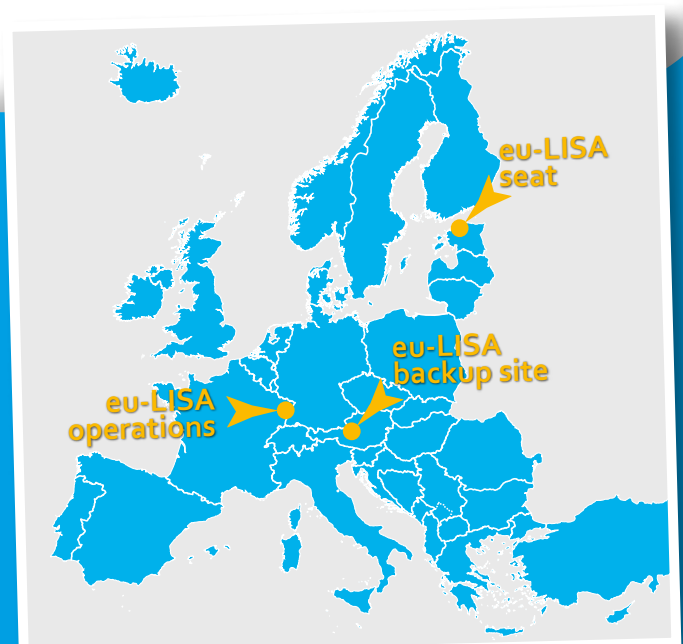
### *eu-LISA in a nutshell*

**Name:** European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice.

**Started operations:** 1 December 2012

**Task:** the Agency manages the IT systems that provide platforms for law-enforcement collaboration, border management and asylum support on a pan-European level. The operations of the Agency provide a crucial supporting role in the practical implementation of free movement within the EU.

**Agency locations:** its headquarters are in Tallinn, Estonia, the operational centre is in Strasbourg, France and the business continuity site for IT systems is in Sankt Johann im Pongau, Austria.



The Agency is also responsible for adopting and implementing security measures on the IT systems, organising training for national authorities' IT experts on the systems under its management, providing relevant reporting and statistics, and monitoring research activities. Moreover, it has to maintain the complete separation of data in the three systems and ensure that security and data protection requirements are fully met.

The Agency also has responsibility for the sophisticated communication tools and networks that support its various IT systems. For instance, eu-LISA provides the communication infrastructure for SIS II, Eurodac and VIS. In addition, it is responsible for the operational management of Vision and DublinET, which ensure the communication for the VIS and Eurodac systems respectively.

In line with its ambitions to become an ICT centre of excellence in its field, the Agency also helps to design, develop and run new systems.

## Mission, vision and values

The Agency's mission is, through implementation of its core mandate, to continuously add value to the Member States, supporting through technology their efforts for a safer Europe.

eu-LISA aims to:

- *Provide high-quality, efficient services and solutions;*
- *Build trust amongst all partners and be able to respond to the evolving ICT needs of EU countries;*
- *Become an acknowledged ICT centre of excellence in this field.*

The Agency's operational focus is on **enhancing security and facilitating the free movement of people within and to the Schengen Area**. It seeks to practically support effective cooperation and information exchange between all relevant EU border management and law-enforcement bodies.

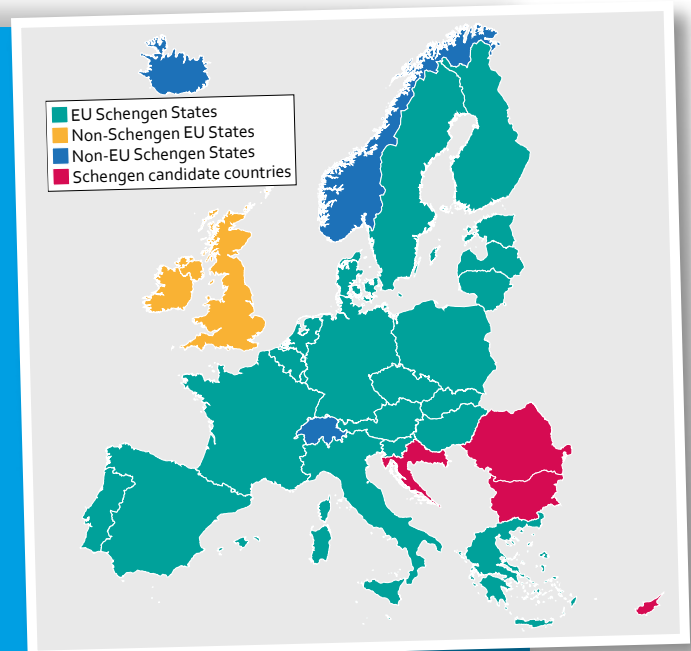
A key part of eu-LISA's work is also to uphold the fundamental rights of citizens when working with sensitive data. It does so by ensuring that it implements the highest standards of information security and data protection.



### What is the Schengen Area?

Established in 1995, the Schengen Area is now made up of 26 European countries. Today it encompasses most EU countries, except for Bulgaria, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and the United Kingdom (though Bulgaria and Romania are currently in the process of joining). A number of non-EU countries — Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland — have also joined the Schengen Area.

Schengen operates in much the same way as a single country, abolishing internal border controls whilst at the same time strengthening controls at external borders. This allows the free and uninterrupted movement of people, goods, services and capital. A major benefit is passport-free travel for more than 400 million EU citizens, as well as for many non-EU nationals.



## Core values

The success of the Agency is based on its core values — **accountability, transparency, excellence, continuity, teamwork, and customer focus** — which underpin its operations and strategic development. These values are reflected in the Agency's guiding implementation principles, which are attracting and retaining talent, developing effective partnerships with national governments and EU institutions, building and maintaining credibility with EU partners, operational excellence, and in addition the provision of transparent governance, cost-effectiveness and full compliance with security and data protection.

## Focused training for IT specialists

eu-LISA organises training on the technical use of all three of the IT systems for which the Agency is responsible. This is delivered by eu-LISA staff to national IT operators, Sirene (Supplementary Information Request at the National Entry) staff and Schengen evaluation team members.

Training remains a major facet of the Agency's work as it continues to map the training needs of EU countries and further develop training materials and initiatives. Common training activities will continue to be developed with other EU Agencies working in justice and home affairs.



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### *eu-LISA's achievements to date*

- *Successfully assumed full responsibility for the operational management of SIS II, VIS and Eurodac and successfully managed the maintenance, evolution and delivery of these systems to Member States;*
- *Continued with the successful implementation of planned maintenance and evolutionary/development activities for all systems under its management;*
- *Created a robust and transparent governance framework for all areas of the Agency;*
- *Became financially autonomous in May 2013, five months after the Agency's creation;*
- *Established strong working relations with relevant partners working in the European justice and home affairs field.*



## 2. Core mandate

### An open and secure Europe

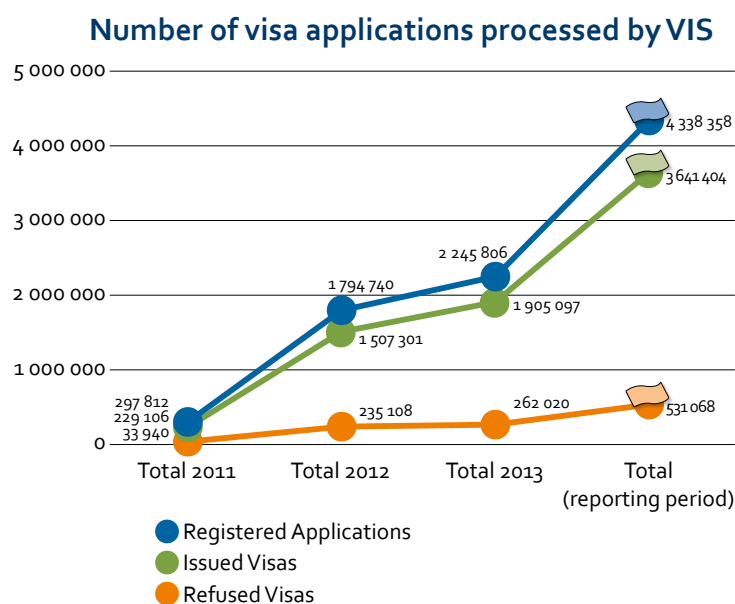
The Agency provides the technical and operational framework to ensure that European citizens and non-EU citizens enjoy the freedom to live, work and travel in a manner they have come to know and expect. More specifically, this means that the Agency is tasked with managing the three main IT systems dealing with visas, asylum requests and the exchange of information to guarantee the security of the Schengen Area. These are the **Visa Information System (VIS)**, the **Schengen Information System (SIS II)** and **Eurodac**.

### VIS (Visa Information System)

The VIS system — which ensures the fair and efficient processing of the EU's common visa policy and travel procedures of external visitors — went live in October 2011. Already used by 26 countries, with worldwide deployment scheduled by mid-2015, it prevents 'visa shopping' (the practice of making further visa applications to other EU countries when a first application has been rejected), assists in the fight against irregular migration, helps to prevent threats to the internal security of the EU, and brings transparent and faster procedures for genuine travellers.

The system allows specific national authorities to enter and consult data, including biometrics, for short-stay visas in the Schengen Area. In the first 23 months of operation, it registered some 4 million visa applications and issued over 3.5 million Schengen Area visas.

To get VIS ready for its global deployment, following a gradual regional rollout, eu-LISA is increasing the system's capacity and search processing power. By 2015, the system will be able to issue up to 100 000 visas a day and will have a processing power of up to 450 000 transactions per hour. Each border post search should take just 3.5 seconds on average.



Source: Report on the technical functioning of VIS, eu-LISA, 2014





## **VIS in action**

*Philip, who is not an EU citizen, would like to visit Bilbao, Spain for 10 days and also make a day-trip to Biarritz, France during that time. All he needs to do is to apply for a visa that will allow him to travel freely to all Schengen countries.*

*Philip goes to a Spanish consulate to request his visa. The consulate then creates the application file in VIS by entering his biographical data, including a photograph and his fingerprints in digital format. The authority checks in VIS whether a previous application has already been registered for Philip. If this is the case, they link this new file to the existing one.*

*The visa authority also consults VIS for previous decisions relating to this application, for example, whether the request has been annulled, revoked, extended or shortened.*

*Philip's application is also checked against the Schengen Information System (SIS II) and national databases. This step helps to identify whether, for example, the applicant has been refused entry into the Schengen area. Depending on the applicant's nationality, other Schengen countries may be asked to check the application.*

*If Philip meets all the requirements he can return to the consular post to collect his visa, which is affixed to his passport.*

*When he arrives at the airport, the border authorities will carry out all necessary checks against VIS and will search the system using the visa reference number. They will also verify his fingerprints to confirm his identity and/or the authenticity of the visa and/or whether the conditions for entry to the Schengen area are fulfilled.*



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## SIS II (Schengen Information System)

Launched in April 2013, SIS II is Europe's largest information system for public security. It enables national border control authorities, police, customs, visa and judicial authorities in the Schengen area to share information and is a vital tool in the investigation of cross-border crimes.

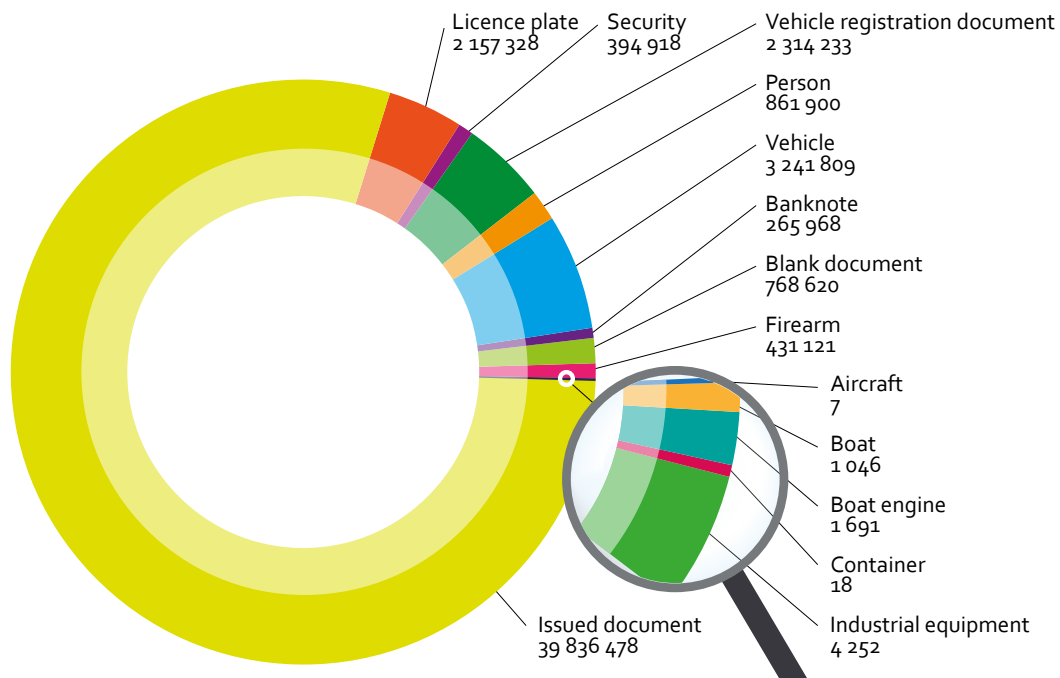
SIS II contains information on people who may have been involved in a serious crime or may not have the right to enter or stay in the EU. It also contains data on missing persons, in particular children. The system does not only deal with people. It contains information on property such as banknotes, firearms and identity documents that may have been lost or stolen.

A national authority in one country can issue an 'alert' into the system describing a person or object they are looking for. The alert may be coupled with an action such as the arrest of a particular person so that officers in the other countries can act on the information

SIS II replaced the Schengen Information System (SIS 1). It offers a more modern system with new and better features, such as biometric data and information on European Arrest Warrants, plus new types of data and better linking options between the different entries.

By late 2013, SIS II contained over 50 million entries from 28 countries using SIS II. On average, 4 000 entries are created, updated or deleted per hour.

**Recorded Alerts on the SIS II Database — status 31.12.2013**



Source: SIS II — 2013 Statistics, eu-LISA, 2014



### SIS II in action

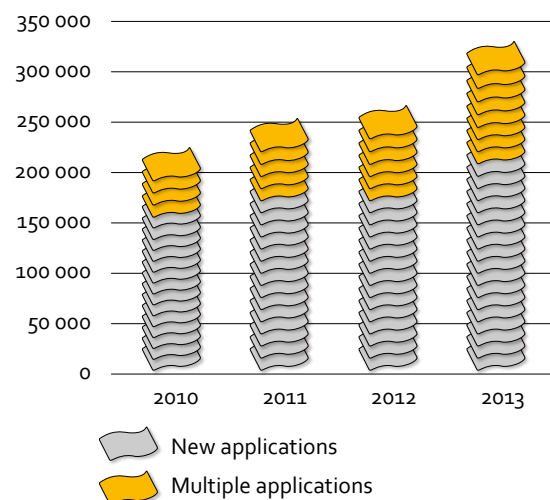
Anne's car was stolen from outside her office in Brussels, Belgium. In the Czech Republic the police stopped the car for speeding. When checking the car's details officers carried out a routine check on the SIS II system. Thanks to the alert issued by the Belgian police their Czech colleagues knew the car was stolen, confiscated it and returned it to Anne.



### Eurodac

Already adopted by 32 countries, this information system enables the efficient and transparent receipt of EU asylum applications from those who may need the protection afforded by European values and standards. In a process that takes just 50 seconds, Eurodac can compare the fingerprints of asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers: this helps to prevent abuses such as 'asylum shopping', where applicants apply for asylum in several EU countries. The system also makes it possible to determine the EU country responsible for examining an asylum application. In 2013, Eurodac facilitated more than 300 000 transactions related to asylum seekers. Its current storage capacity, 2.8 million digital fingerprints, should expand in 2015.

**New applications vs. multiple applications since 2010**



Source: eu-LISA, 2014



### Eurodac in action

Jo (18) and Lucas (23) are brothers. Due to the political situation in their home country they decide to flee to Europe. When arriving in Croatia with fake passports, they submit an application for asylum. The receiving authority checks their fingerprints against Eurodac data to determine whether they have already requested asylum in any Member State. This helps the Croatian authorities to determine which country is responsible for processing the request for asylum as well as look after Jo and Lucas. Several criteria are used to identify which country is responsible for an asylum seeker; Eurodac is one of them.



# 3. Organisation

## People

eu-LISA is committed to developing and retaining its employees. It recruits personnel with the skills required for the Agency to successfully implement its strategy in terms of operations, as well as monitoring IT security and data protection, running sophisticated large-scale IT systems, and communicating the Agency's benefits and results to national authorities and ordinary Europeans.

At the end of 2013, eu-LISA had 129 staff members (31 % women and 69 % men) representing 22 nationalities. They are split across two sites, with 47 based in the headquarters in Tallinn and 82 in the Strasbourg operational centre.

## Governance

The Agency's administrative and management structure comprises an Executive Director, Management Board and Advisory Groups for each of the systems under the Agency's management. All governance bodies consist of representatives from EU countries and Associated Countries, the European Commission and a number of European Agencies working in the justice and home affairs field.

Consequently, eu-LISA can engage in dialogue with all relevant institutional stakeholders in every area connected to EU border management, asylum and migration. This governance structure is designed to improve confidence and trust between the Agency and national authorities, which should result in enhanced cooperation.

## Management Board

The Management Board includes representatives of EU countries and the European Commission. Associated Countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), as well European agencies such as Europol and Eurojust, are also represented. Its role is to ensure that the Agency delivers the objectives and tasks — as set out in eu-LISA's establishing regulation — in the most cost-effective way, in line with its strategic goals and objectives.

## Advisory Groups

Each IT system operated by the Agency is supported by an Advisory Group. These groups are made up of experts from the EU countries, Associated Countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), a representative of the European Commission, Europol (for SIS II and VIS) and Eurojust (for SIS II). They provide the Management Board with specific technical expertise on the systems that they support.



## Building open and transparent relationships

eu-LISA works very closely with other partners working in similar fields and has built strong working relationships with a number of them through formal agreements.

On 20 November 2013, eu-LISA signed a Working Arrangement protocol with Cefpol (European Police College). It has also signed a similar agreement with Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union) and with the European Commission on 31 January 2014. These Working Arrangements pave the way for cooperation, exchange of best practice and expertise based on common interests and objectives.

The Agency is also building other formal and informal networks in order to exchange experience and knowledge with specific partners. It is hoped that these exchanges will lead to the development and deployment of common systems and technology platforms for the operational aspects of EU justice, security and freedom policies.



*Cefpol values its relationships with other agencies in the field of justice and home affairs [...]. I look forward to a long and fruitful cooperation with eu-LISA, whose ICT knowledge and capability will be highly appreciated.*

*Dr Ferenc Bánfi, Cefpol Director*



*The eu-LISA/Frontex working arrangement is a practical example of how European agencies collaborate and create synergies that benefit EU countries and their people.*

*Mr Krum Garkov, eu-LISA Executive Director*



# 4. Looking to the future

In line with its core mandate, this relatively young Agency is set to develop its operations and services still further over the coming years. Much of the focus is on enhancing the added value of its systems and technologies for the EU and its citizens, ever mindful of doing so in a cost-effective and efficient way. The three objectives of system availability, stability and further evolution will continue to guide its work.

In the near term, the Agency's main operational goal is to maintain the stable and continuous operations of systems under its management, whilst building a modern and efficient organisation. eu-LISA will also have to deliver several key projects:

- *Upgrading of VIS/Biometric Matching System (BMS) for visa applications ahead of its further roll-out;*
- *Start making the required changes to Eurodac following the Recast Regulation.*

In the long term, chiefly through its IT systems, eu-LISA aims to make entering the EU faster and more efficient for those entitled to do so, without jeopardising security. This will ensure that the Union remains open to the world and an attractive destination for non-EU travellers. Through its open and transparent communication with the general public, the Agency will highlight the value of full free movement within the EU.

## R&D at eu-LISA

Keeping pace with the ICT needs of EU countries and the security challenges they face means investing in research. To remain relevant and at the forefront of developments in its field, the Agency keeps track of new and emerging technologies that may be of operational use for current or future systems or tasks.

To see if new technologies can be incorporated into existing or new systems, the Agency will deliver the 'Smart Borders' pilot project in 2015. This will tie in with the EU's Smart Borders package, which includes the Entry/Exit System (EES) and the Registered Travellers Programme (RTP), aimed at speeding up border check procedures for people from outside the EU when they enter the territory, whilst enhancing security. With travel flows at the EU's external borders increasing and continuing to do so in future — at air borders alone, such crossings are predicted to grow by 80% between 2009 and 2030 — projects like this could prove essential for smoothing EU travel and security.

## eu-LISA strategic goals for 2014-2020

The Agency is building its reputation as a reliable and trusted contributor to the implementation of policies in the area of justice, security and freedom. However, as a young organisation it is seeking to ways to improve service delivery and has developed a six-year strategy that allows it to outline and help to shape this growth for the next 6 years. The strategic goals outlined in the 'eu-LISA Strategy 2014-2020' reflect its mandate and its priorities, as defined through dialogue with Member States.

The strategy is a dynamic document, meaning that these goals will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis and will be adapted to meet the evolving needs of the Agency's stakeholders and the changing geopolitical landscape in which the Agency operates.

### Strategic goals



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Common European Asylum System: [ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/index_en.htm)

Police cooperation: [ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/police-cooperation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/police-cooperation/index_en.htm)

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